

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are in this application and are presented for consideration. By this amendment, Applicant has amended claims 1, 3, 9 and 15.

The Office Action provides the preferred layout for the specification of a utility application and states that the guidelines are suggested for Applicant's use.

It is Applicant's position that Applicant's substitute specification already employs the preferred layout for a utility specification.

Claims 1-6, 8-12, 14-18 and 20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yokochi et al. (U.S. 6,123,216) in view of Robinson (WO 92/06324).

The present invention relates to a tank for oils or liquids. A critical aspect of the tank is that one end of a fastening means is located within a liquid impermeable duct wherein the one end of the fastening means is surrounded by the tank volume of the tank. This advantageously allows one end of the fastening means to be recessed within the tank part. This is crucial to the present invention because it holds the fastening means in place when the tank is mounted within a motor vehicle. This advantageously prevents the screw from becoming disconnected during mounting of the tank. This drastically reduces assembly costs of mounting the tank to the vehicle since the time it takes to connect the tank to the vehicle is significantly reduced. Another feature of the present invention is that the inner surface of the tank part that defines a duct is integrally formed with the tank part. This advantageously does not require any welding of parts to form the duct. This significantly decreases manufacturing costs since the time to produce the tank is drastically reduced. The prior art as a whole fails

to teach or suggest such features or such manufacturing cost reducing advantages.

Yokocho et al. fails to teach and fails to suggest the combination of a fastening means having one end that is recessed within a duct and surrounded by a tank volume as claimed. Yokocho et al. merely discloses that bolts 81, 82 pass through bolt-holes 12, 16 and 17 located at mounting plate portions 11 and 14. However, neither the end of bolt 81 nor the end of bolt 82 of Yokocho et al. is located within a duct such that the end of the bolt is surrounded by a volume of the double chamber tank as featured in the present invention. Yokocho et al. takes a completely different approach than of the present invention. Compared to the present invention, Yokocho et al. only provides bolts that are located along the periphery of the double chamber tank. This does not provide any duct that holds one end of a fastening means within the tank volume as claimed. In contrast to Yokocho et al., one end of the fastening means of the present invention is arranged within a duct that is defined by an inner surface of a tank part structure. The duct advantageously holds the screw in place during mounting of the tank to a motor vehicle. This advantageously ensures that the screw will not be lost during mounting of the tank. This also allows the tank to be mounted in tight spaces since one end of the screw is already located within the duct. Yokocho et al. does not disclose such compact mounting features since the ends of the through bolts 81, 82 of Yokocho et al. are not surrounded by a tank volume as claimed. Yokocho et al. clearly discloses that the bolts 81, 82 are provided along the periphery of the tank. In fact, Yokocho et al. does not teach or suggest a tank part structure that has an inner surface that is integrally connected thereto wherein the inner surface defines a duct for receiving at least a portion of a fastening means. As such, the prior art as a

whole takes a completely different approach and fails to teach or suggest important features of the claimed combination.

Robinson fails to provide any teaching or suggestion for the combination of a fastening means having one end that is surrounded by a tank volume as claimed. Robinson only discloses four columnar steel rods 20 that extend between and through top and bottom walls 12 and 14 and are externally screw threaded outwardly of the interior of the vessel to facilitate location of the vessel. According to Robinson, the rods 20 are welded to the top and bottom walls 12 and 14. However, none of the columnar steel rods 20 have an end that is surrounded by a tank volume. This does not allow the columnar steel rods 20 of Robinson to be held in place when the vessel is mounted. Compared with Robinson, one end of the fastening means of the present invention is provided in a duct that is defined by an inner surface of a tank part structure such that the one end of the fastening means is surrounded by the tank volume. This allows the one end of the fastening means to be recessed within the duct with respect to one of the tank walls. This advantageously ensures that the fastening means remains within the duct during mounting of the tank. This ensures that the screw is not lost during the mounting process so that assembly time is significantly reduced. In contrast to the present invention, the rods 20 of Robinson do not have any end that is located within the tank volume as claimed since Robinson discloses that the screw threaded ends of the rods are located at a position that is outside of the interior of the tank. In fact, Robinson does not teach or suggest a tank part structure having an inner surface that is integrally connected thereto to define a duct for receiving at least a portion of a fastening means as claimed. Robinson merely discloses that

the rods 20 are welded to the bottom and top walls 12 and 14. This disadvantageously increases manufacturing costs since welding the rods 20 to the bottom and top walls 12 and 14 requires a lot of manufacturing time. Such manufacturing costs are avoided in the present invention since the inner surface is integrally formed with the tank part structure. As such, the prior art as a whole takes a completely different approach and fails to establish a prima facie case of obviousness since the prior art as a whole does not teach or suggest important features of the claimed combination. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner favorably consider claims 1, 9 and 15 as now presented and all claims that respectively depend thereon.

Claims 7, 13 and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yokocho et al. and Robinson and further in view of Alleaume (U.S. 3,511,003). Although Alleaume teaches a fixed land device that constitutes a closed, fluid-tight enclosure, the references as a whole fail to suggest the combination of features claimed. Specifically, Yokocho et al. and Robinson provide no suggestion or teaching for the combination of at least one fastening means that has one end that is surrounded by a tank volume. As such, the references together do not teach or suggest the combination of features claimed. One of ordinary skill in the art is presented with various concepts, but these concepts do not provide any direction as to combining the features claimed. Accordingly, all claims define over the prior art as a whole.

Favorable consideration on the merits is requested.

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